DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 157 335 EC 111 820

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TITLE Rehabilitation Services Program - Red Deer College (A Training Model for Para-Professionals).
PUB DATE Jun 78
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the World Congress on Future Special Education (First, Stirling, Scotland, June 25 - July 1, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Handicapped; Higher Education; *Inservice Education; *Institutes (Training Programs); *Paraprofessional Personnel; Post Secondary Education; *Program Descriptions; Rehabilitation

ABSTRACT

The paper describes a 2-year college program designed to meet the need for front-line workers, who have been trained within the developmental model, to work with people exhibiting a broad variety of handicaps. The program is explained to adhere to a philosophy of normalization/integration for the handicapped. The orientation is noted to be practical in nature, with fieldwork a heavy component. It is reported that the scheduling is flexible, therefore, it not only caters to preservice training but inservice training needs as well. (Author/SBH)

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# REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM - RED DEER COLLEGE

## (A TRAINING MODEL FOR PARA-PROFESSIONALS)

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A B S T R A C T

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The paper describes a two year college program designed to meet the growing need for front-line workers, who have been trained within the developmental model to work with people exhibiting a broad variety of handicaps including sensory, physical and mental. The program adheres to philosophy of normalization / integration for the handicapped. The orientation of the program is practical in nature, with fieldwork a heavy component. The scheduling is flexible therefore, it not only caters to pre-service training but also to in-service training needs.

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At the beginning of the 1970's the total philosophy for working with the developmentally handicapped in Canada changed. We moved from a custodial-medical model to one of integration-normalization. This shift in orientation necessitated the training of a new type of worker. One resulting action in Alberta was the discontinuation of the training program for Mental Deficiency Nurses in 1972, and the development of a two year Rehabilitation Services Program in 1974.

The Rehabilitation Services Program at Red Deer College (one of four in the Province of Alberta) is designed to train workers to meet the special needs of persons with various disabilities: mental retardation, blindness, deafness and physical handicaps. Emphasis is placed on the graduate having direct contact with disabled clients in order to assist the latter in developing independent life styles to the fullest extent. Day to day work of these workers consists of a range of activities such as toilet training for the severely retarded, teaching of community living skills for those who have been institutionalized, training in self help skills, assisting persons who are physically handicapped to meet their personal care needs, etc. The specific activities carried out by the graduates depends on the type of setting in which they are working, (e.g. residential, vocational, recreational) as well as on the nature and severity of the particular disability.

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Rehabilitation Services is now going into its fifth year at Red Deer College with the greater emphasis on community integration of the handicapped. As well, graduates are capable of working in institutional settings where the need for such facilities exists.

Traditionally, training programs for workers in the human services field have emphasized narrow specialties such as psychology, social work, nursing, special education or physiotherapy. Such specialties often led to a fragmentation of services with no one attending to the total needs of the person. Also, advancement in these traditional occupations often leads a person into administrative jobs with decreasing direct contact with clients. The focus of the Rehabilitation Services Program is on maintaining contact with clients working with basic activities of daily living.

The training program has a three-prong thrust:

1. the development of specific attitudes
2. the learning of skills and knowledge
3. the application of these skills and attitudes in practical settings

Certain attitudes for effective helping are deemed important and are promoted in the Rehabilitation Practitioner. Some of these important attitudes are:

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1. Recognition that individuals possess potential
2. An attitude of optimism despite the severity of the individual's disability
3. A recognition of the contribution of other professionals and the need for harmonious interdisciplinary working relationships
4. An attitude which is understanding and promoting of self-esteem and independence in the handicapped
5. A respect for the handicapped individual as a human being with equality

The skills to be taught, in both first and second years, have been specifically outlined by the RUSH Committee. (This is the Provincial Advisory Committee to the Rehabilitation Programs). The committee designed a matrix, first identifying the major work areas, that is vocational / residential, developmental / educational and recreation / leisure. They secondly identified the functions or duties of the workers in the above areas. In this manner they developed a series of modules or courses, with recommendations of the year in which they should be taught.

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FIRST YEAR

LEVEL I: FOR CERTIFICATE

| RUSH | (hrs) | RED DEER COLLEGE | (hrs) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Communications | 50 | Communications | 45 |
| Handicapping Conditions | 50 | Exceptional Individual | 60 |
| History, Systems and Resources | 30 | History and Trends | 45 |
| Observation and Assessment | 30 | Behaviour Management I | 45 |
| Program Design and Implementation | 30 | Behaviour Management II | 30 |
| Social Education | 40 | Behaviour Management III | 45 |
| Human Development | 45 | Human Growth and Development | 45 |
| General Health Care | 30 | Health Care | 45 |
| ONE OF: | | | |
| Vocational Training<br>Residential Programs<br>Developmental Day Programs<br>Recreation/Leisure Programs | 40 | Residential Programs | 45 |
| Program Electives | 100 | Written Communication | 45 |
| | | Sociology of Rehabilitation | 45 |
| | | First Aid | 15 |
| | | Block Practicum 280<br>Block Practicum 160 | 440 |
| | | Academic 510<br>Practicum 440 | 950 |

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SECOND YEAR

LEVEL II: FOR DIPLOMA

| RUSH | (hrs) | RED DEER COLLEGE | (hrs) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Psychology | 50 | Basic Psychological Process | 45 |
| Counselling | 50 | Counselling | 60 |
| Sociology and Family Systems | 50 | Community Organization | 45 |
| Community Organization / Follow Up / Placement | 40 | Family Dynamics | 45 |
| Family Support Programs | 30 | | |
| ONE OF: Vocations Training / Residential Programs / Development Day Programs / Recreation/Leisure Programs | 40 | Recreation/Leisure Programs | 45 |
| ONE OF: Infant/Child / Child/Adolescent / Adolescent/Adult / Adult/Geriatric | 15 | Dynamics of Growth | 45 |
| Program Electives | 125 | Special Skills Modules | 45 |
| | | Integrative Seminar | 15 |
| Practicum Studies | 450 | Block Practicum | 640 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Academic | 345 |
| Practicum | 640 |
| | 985 |

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Basically, work in the program involves two components: classroom instruction and field placement in a rehabilitation setting. Approximately fifty per cent of the time is directed to each of these components in both years of the program. In classroom instruction, the students learn a variety of skills such as techniques of promoting activities of daily living, behaviour management, counselling, basic nursing, vocational skills, working with families, and theory areas - such as handicapping conditions and history and trends of Rehabilitation. In addition there are a number of mini-skill modules that give the student an opportunity to learn more specific rehabilitation methods. Some modules taught have been: sign language for the deaf, special crafts, parent training, Blissymoblics and mobility and transfer techniques for the physically handicapped.

The practicums involve the student spending from one to two months per session in facilities that service the needs of the handicapped, for example, nursing homes, institutions, group homes, day care centres, schools and other community agencies. Practicum placements are utilized throughout the province although first year students are usually kept in the Central Alberta area for ease of supervision. Students spend the equivalent of the regular working day carrying out the similar types of activities in which regular employees in the particular agency are engaged.

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At the completion of the two years, it is hoped the graduate will have developed an awareness for the above stated attitudes and integrate them with the following global competencies:

1. An awareness of current research and philosophies in order to integrate them with daily practice
2. An ability to identify problems, needs and/or the lack of certain necessary skills in the handicapped by:
   a) observing an individual
   b) assessing the individual through the use of developmental scales
   c) choosing priorities for programming while considering all aspects of the individual's environment
   d) writing an individualized program
   e) and finally, administrating the program with continuous re-evaluation
3. The knowledge of and ability to utilize community facilities and personnel
4. The ability to involve the handicapped individual and significant others, such as the family, in promoting the client's own growth
5. The ability to modify a facility and/or agency to meet the needs of the handicapped individual
6. A general knowledge of human development and an awareness of the problems encountered in handicapping conditions

As presently constituted, the program at Red Deer College provides students with the option of taking a one year certificate or a two year diploma. However



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job availability in Central Alberta and potential advancement on the career ladder is much better with the two year diploma, and we generally retain about 80 per cent of the first year students through to second year. Approximately forty (40) full time students are admitted yearly. Another twenty (20) students, who are employed full-time as Institutional Aides at Michener Centre (the provincial institution for the mentally retarded) are also admitted. These students have had no previous training despite many years of experience in the field. They take the same basic program as the full-time students, however, receive credit in some areas for past experience. It takes approximately eighteen months for these students to complete the one year certificate.

Another aspect of the program is a credit banking system. This offers an opportunity for personnel working in the field to receive college credit (for in-service programs, workshops, specialized training, etc.) which is directly transferable to the Rehabilitation Services Program. These people may not wish to work towards a certificate and/or diploma, however, may receive job advancement or pay increases for such course work.

Yet another component of the Rehabilitation Services Program at Red Deer College is Equivalency Training. This is a six month program which offers an "update" to persons who were previously educated as Mental Deficiency Nurses. The Equivalency Training Program orients these employees to current philosophies and new programs for working with the developmentally handicapped. This program



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is conducted for employees of Michener Centre, Cormack Centre in Edmonton and Baker Centre in Calgary.

ALTERNATE ROUTES TO TRAINING
AT
RED DEER COLLEGE

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Full Time Student | - Certificate |
| 2. I.A. Part Time Student | - Certificate |
| 3. Part Time Student | - Certificate |
| 4. In-Service - Credit Banking | - Certificate |
| 5. Proposed - Open Learning System (1979) | - Certificate |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Full Time Student | - Diploma |
| 2. Part Time Student | - Diploma |
| 3. Equivalent Training | - Diploma |

To date sixty-five (65) students have graduated with a diploma in Rehabilitation Services. All have found employment with the majority working in residential settings for the retarded, this being the present provincial government's priority for allocation of funds and hence, the area in which the program tends to specialize. There are encouraging indications that there will be more employment available in future in facilities for persons with other disabilities. Already a few stud have found jobs working with the physically handicapped and deaf and we are optimistic that other areas will continue to open up as new graduates come onto the job market.